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WLW
CINCINNATI

FORTUNES WASHED AWAY

115
P.M. E.S.T.

A SERIES OF DRAMATIZATIONS OF BETTER LAND USE.

No. 189

"GRASS SILAGE FARMER"

December 6, 1943

ORGAN THEME: DEEP RIVER

VOICE

We took it for granted that land was everlasting;

We said ownership of the land insured security.

Tools would wear out, men would die --

But the land would remain.

ORGAN: ABRUPT DISCORD

ANNOUNCER

Fortunes Washed Away!

ORGAN: DEEP RIVER, fading behind...

ANNOUNCER

The broad prairies of Champaign County, Ohio, rolling like the blue-green swell of a quiet sea, have always been fruitful. The sturdy pioneers, rumbling westward more than a century ago in their billowing Conestoga wagons, sought out its lands to build new homes. Peculiar among the tree-covered landscape was the area around the village of West Liberty, where the forest had left unchallenged the deep grasses of the virgin prairie. Many pioneers had shunned it, calling it "the barrens, where even the trees wouldn't grow." In this community is the scene of the 189th consecutive episode of Fortunes Washed Away.

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ORGAN: UP AND OUT.

ANNOUNCER (cold)

One shrewd homeseeker was not afraid of the land called "The Barrens". His name was John Yoder, and for a hundred years his descendants have occupied a high place in the agriculture of Champaign County. Our story today is about one of these descendants. It begins in the late autumn of 1929....(FADE)

SOUND: Carpenters at work; hammers pounding...

YODER

Ah, good wife, and how does our new home look to you now?

BERTHA

It's lovely, I can see, now that it's nearly done. But John, dear, we've been awfully extravagant -- putting hardwood floors in every room. We owe the bank so much money.

YODER

Now don't you worry, pet. We'll have enough hogs ready for the spring market to pay off a lot of that 45 hundred dollar note. We've earned this home, dear, you and I together.

BERTHA

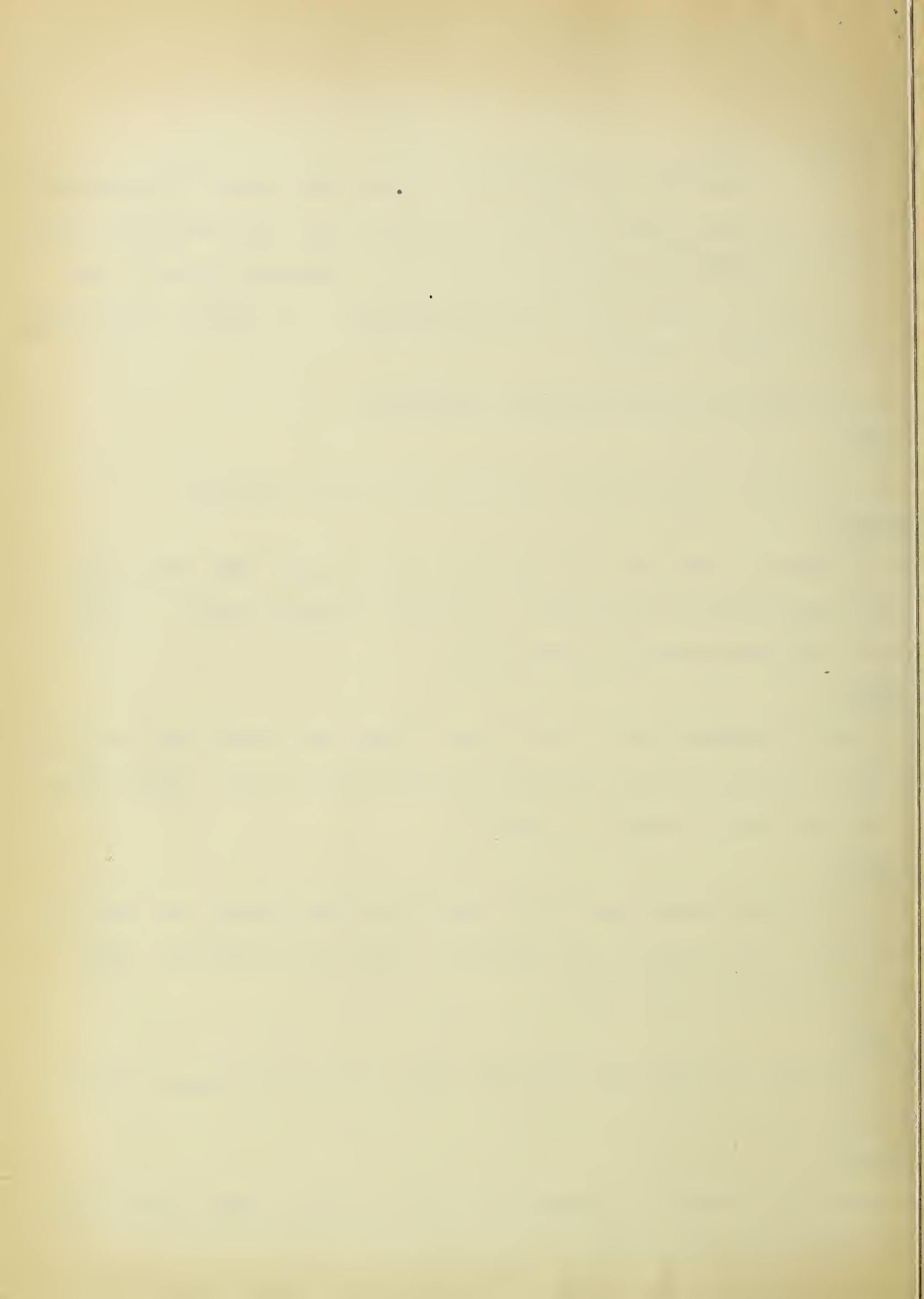
Yes, this house does make all our sacrifices seem small, now that we can have a real home for our children. They're so thrilled, John, it's all they can talk about.

YODER

Bet you never thought this old land would raise a new house, did you Bertha?

BERTHA

It was your scientific farming that did it, John -- that "book farming" you learned at Ohio State



YODER

The formula is simple, dear -- just put back into the soil what you take out.

BERTHA

But it hasn't been that simple, John Yoder. You've worked awful hard, and sometimes I worry about your health. You don't rest well at nights.

YODER

Oh shaw, Bertha, you just leave all the worrying to me. We have our farm, our children, and now our new house. What if we do owe a little money? We'll come out on top.

SOUND: Auto approaches....

BERTHA

I can't help but think something's going to happen, John.

SOUND: Auto pulls up...stops...door slams....

YODER

Why, it's Banker Jones. Hi there!

JONES

Hello, John, and how'd do, Mrs. Yoder.

BERTHA

What brings you here, Mr. Jones?

JONES

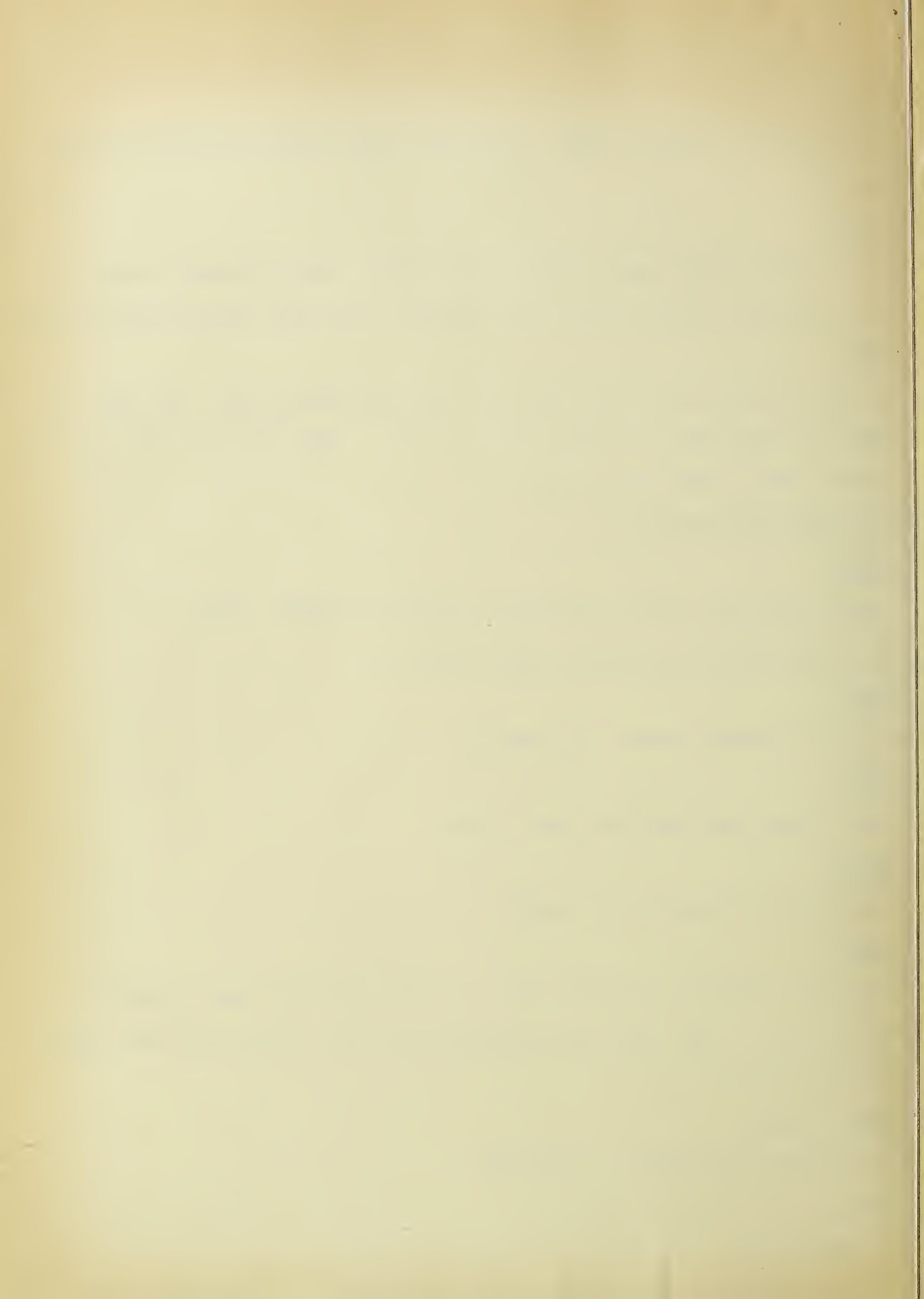
Well, the truth is, I didn't want to come. Afraid I got some bad news for you. Fact is, our correspondent bank in New York has called a loan of ours.....

YODER (coldly)

So you want your money, is that it?

BERTHA

Oh, John.....



JONES

It isn't that we want the money, John, but our New York Bank does. We may get an extension, but right now things look pretty desperate for us all.

BERTHA (pleading)

Oh, I was afraid something like this would happen. We can't sell our pigs now, and our corn. Can't you wait till our shoats are ready for market? If we have to sell out now we might...lose....our home.

JONES

Oh, I want to help all I can. But you know how the market's going... Why, Mrs. Yoder, are you ill?

YODER

Bertha! Bertha! Hey, one of you boys, fetch some water quick! My wife's fainted!

ORGAN: Brief Bridge....

ANNOUNCER

Those were trying days, those early 1930's. The bank fought for its customers, but everything the Yoders could sell went on the market -- the pigs and the crops. John Yoder cropped his land hard, but prices were low....(FADE)

SOUND: Crowd noises of stock market...

ORGAN: Begin montage...

ANNOUNCER

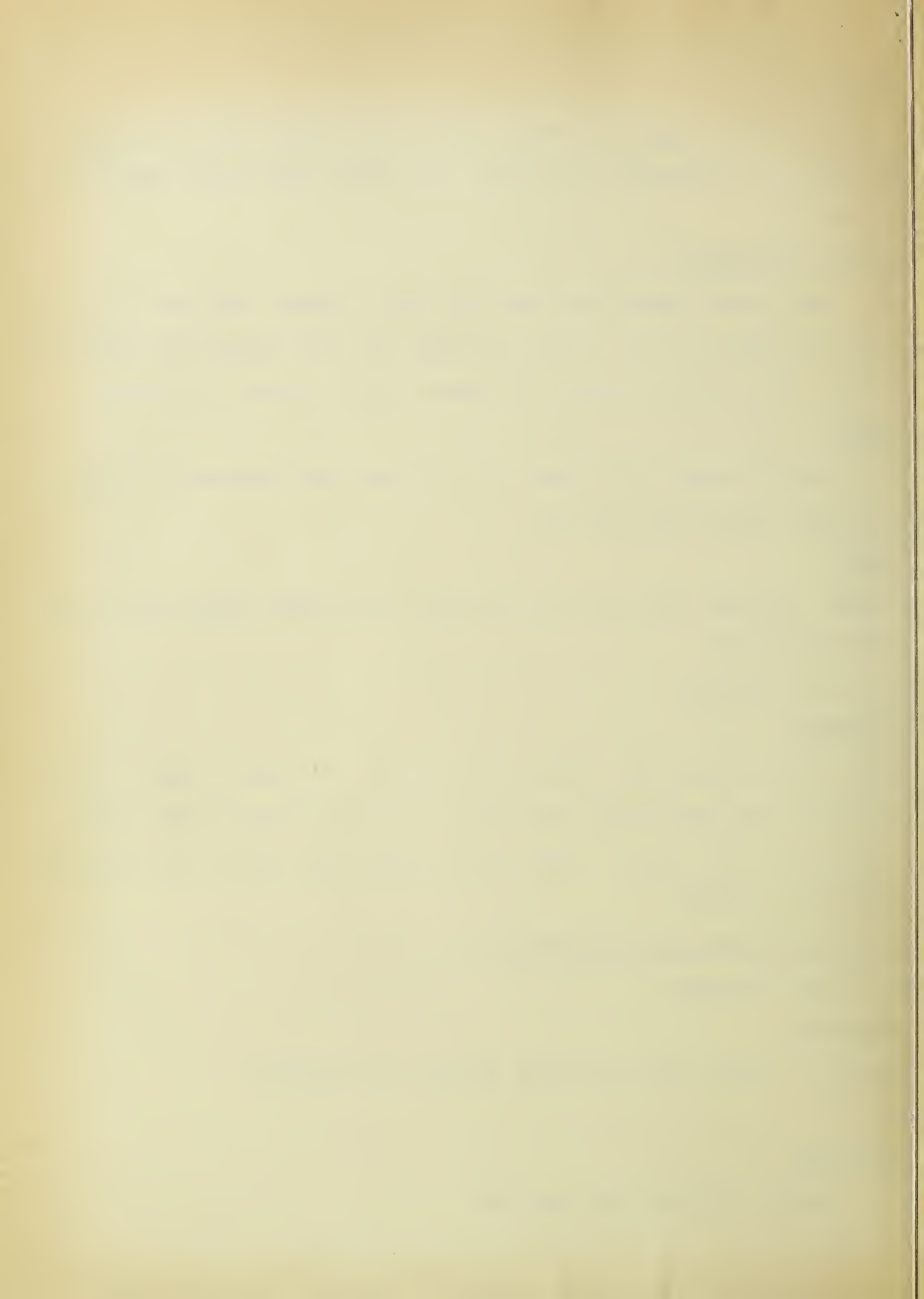
Chicago: Record hog run breaks dressed pork market!

ORGAN: UP

ANNOUNCER

New Orleans: Cotton hits new low!

ORGAN: UP



MONTAGE CONTINUED

ANNOUNCER

Kansas City: Unwanted wheat burned for fuel.

ORGAN: UP

ANNOUNCER

Chicago: Market closes for day after 5-cent per bushel drop!

ORGAN: UP AND OUT

(PRODUCTION NOTE: PAUSE FOR FIVE SECONDS.)

DOCTOR

As your family physician, John, I must tell you that you are working too hard. You'll have to ease up -- a lot.

YODER

But, Doc, I just can't let up now. Not now. I've got to ride out this depression.

DOCTOR

John, you've got to take my advice.

YODER

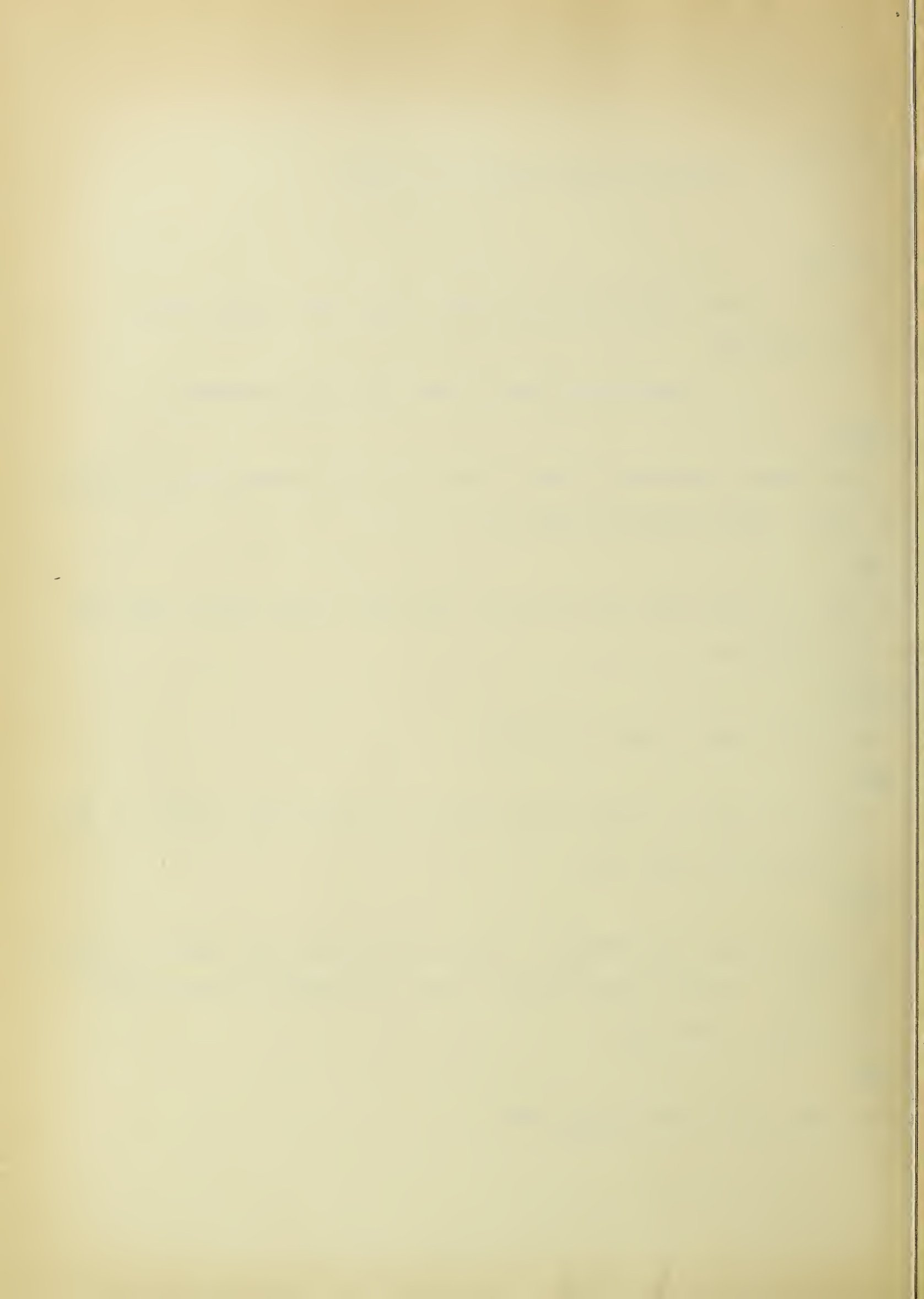
No, Doc, I've got to raise every bushel my place can produce -- even at the expense of the soil.

DOCTOR

Now listen to me, John Yoder. I know more about your affairs than you think I do. If your family want to keep on having a father you'd better do as I tell you!

YODER

Gosh, Doc, is it really that bad?



DOCTOR

You've just got to quit using your strength, John. Listen, you were born with a clear head and you spent four years filling it at Ohio State. Don't you think it's about time you used that head a little more, and your body less?

YODER

Why, yes, Doc, I suppose you're right. (EXCITEDLY) Say! I have been thinking about something lately. By George! It is time for me to start using my head! So long, Doc, and thanks!

DOCTOR

Hey, John, where are you going?

YODER (off mike)

To the bank, Doc, to borrow some money!

SOUND: Door opens, closes...

ORGAN: Brief bridge...

JONES

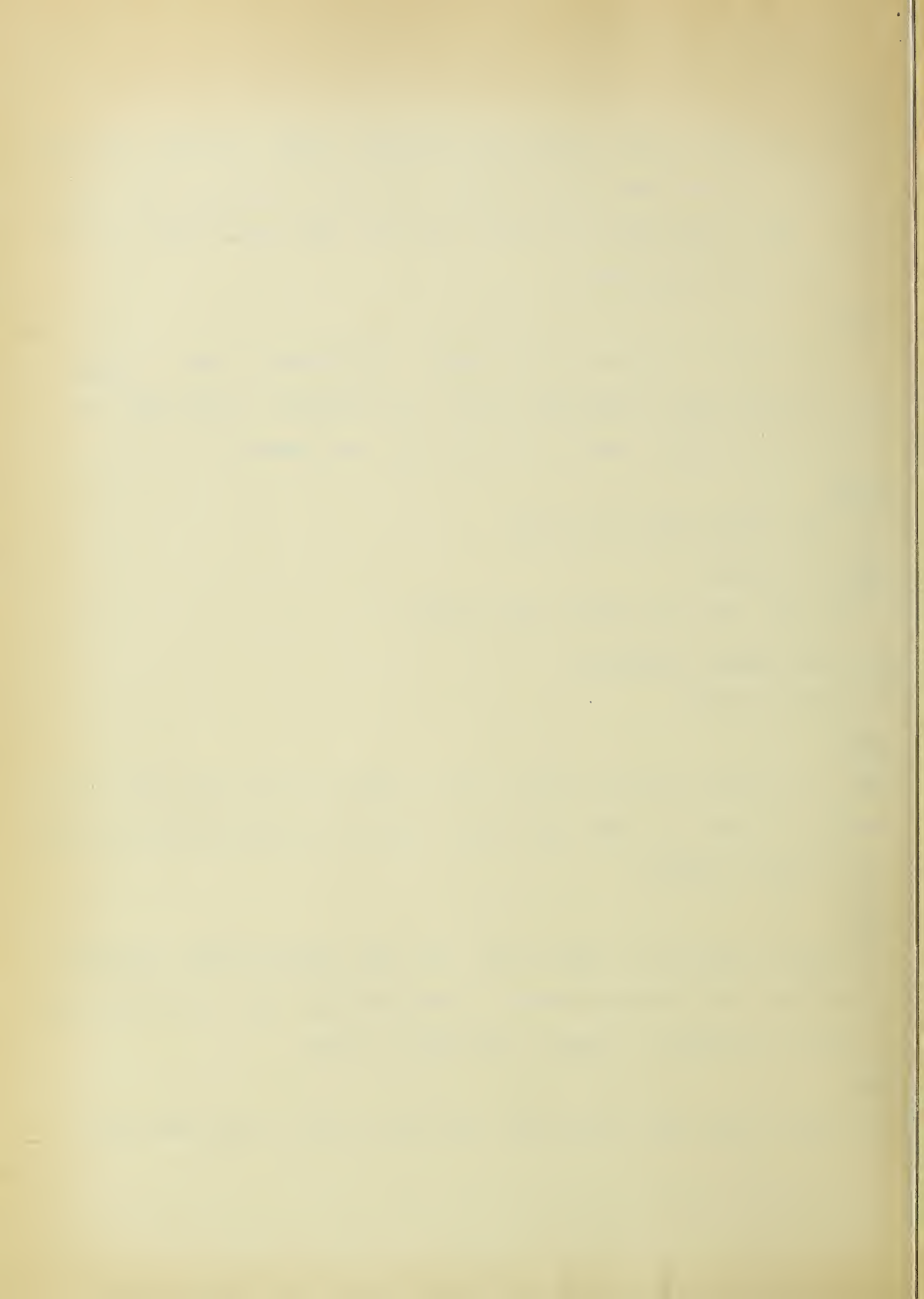
John, if I didn't know you had a lot of sense I'd say you were crazy, coming to me with an idea like this. Where in tarnation did you ever hear of such a thing?

YODER

I've had the idea for a long time. You see, they've been using hay for ensilage over in New Jersey -- successfully, too. And I've read all their bulletins. I know I can make it work.

JONES

Well, what's that got to do with the orders your doctor gave you?



YODER

You see, Mister Jones, if I've got to use more brains and less muscle I've got to get away from corn-hog farming. Now I've studied this hay silage movement; it fits nicely into the dairy business.

JONES

But you've got only a few heifers.

YODER

But that's why I came to see you! My plan is to market milk at a profit instead of corn at a loss.

JONES

How in tarnation will that save your muscle?

YODER

That's easy. Instead of planting 30 acres of corn to fill my silos I'll fill the silos with alfalfa.

JONES

I begin to get the idea, John.

YODER

And another thing. Alfalfa builds up the soil. I won't have to run it down anymore with quick rotations like I have been doing the last three years.

JONES

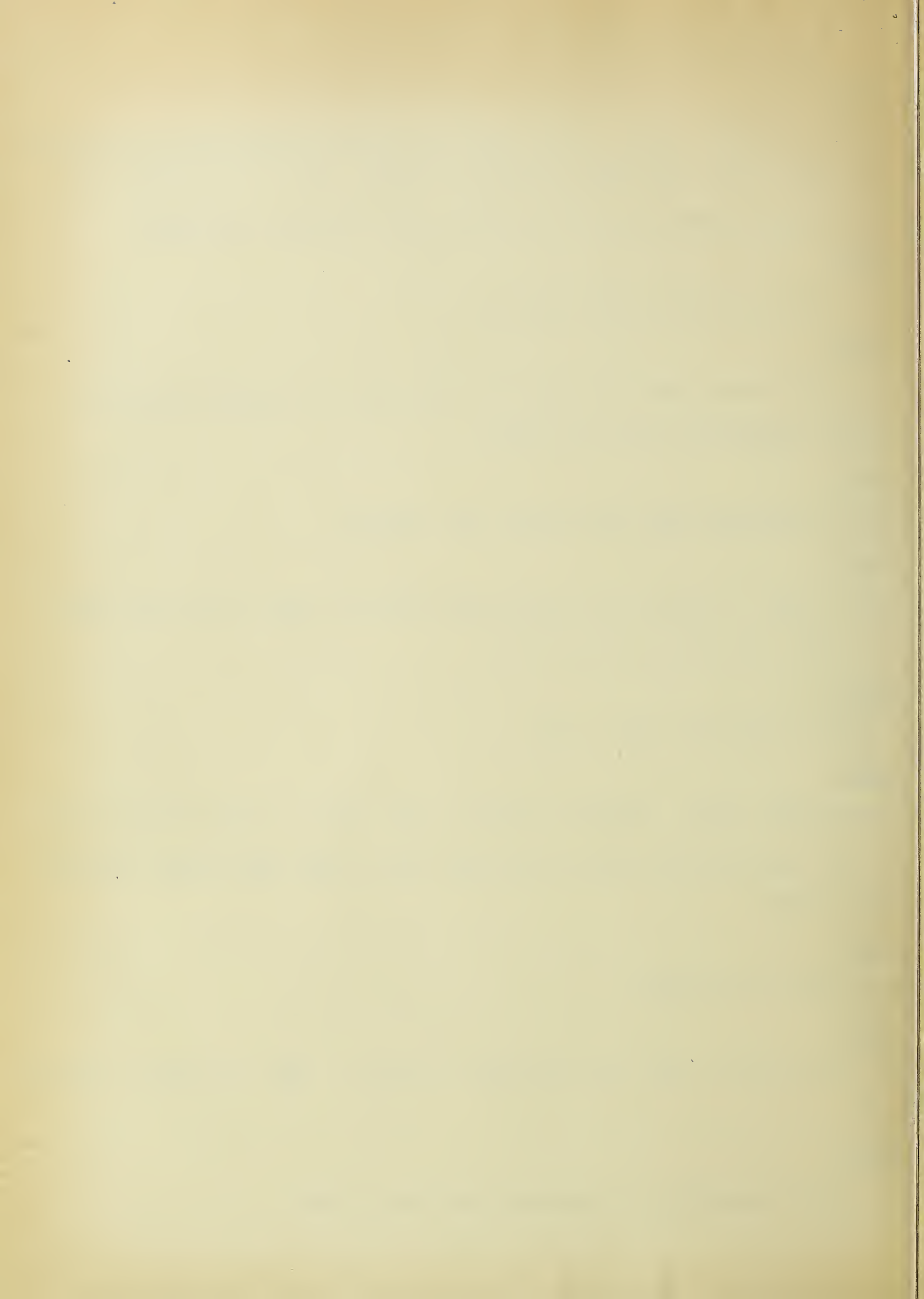
What about your hogs?

YODER

Oh, I'll have to sell 'em and take a licking. But I'm used to lickings now.

JONES

It hasn't lowered your fighting spirit any, John.



YODER

No, I haven't taken the count, yet, even if the Doc did order me to take more time out between rounds! (LAUGHTER)

JONES

Well, John, I'm willing to take a chance with you on your new idea. Things have eased up a bit, now, since the bank holiday. That note of yours can ride a while longer.

YODER

Thanks, Mister Jones. But...I'll need more money. I've got to buy those cows.

JONES

Go ahead and buy 'em. You've still got one of our checkbooks haven't you?

ORGAN: Brief bridge....

ANNOUNCER

That was the beginning of a new life for John Yoder. Before long, 85 head of registered Holsteins added a picturesque touch to the quiet pastoral scene along the highway. Milk checks came in regularly. Best of all, the Yoder fields were healthy and vigorous. One day, a few years ago...(FADE)

SOUND: Ensilage cutter running....

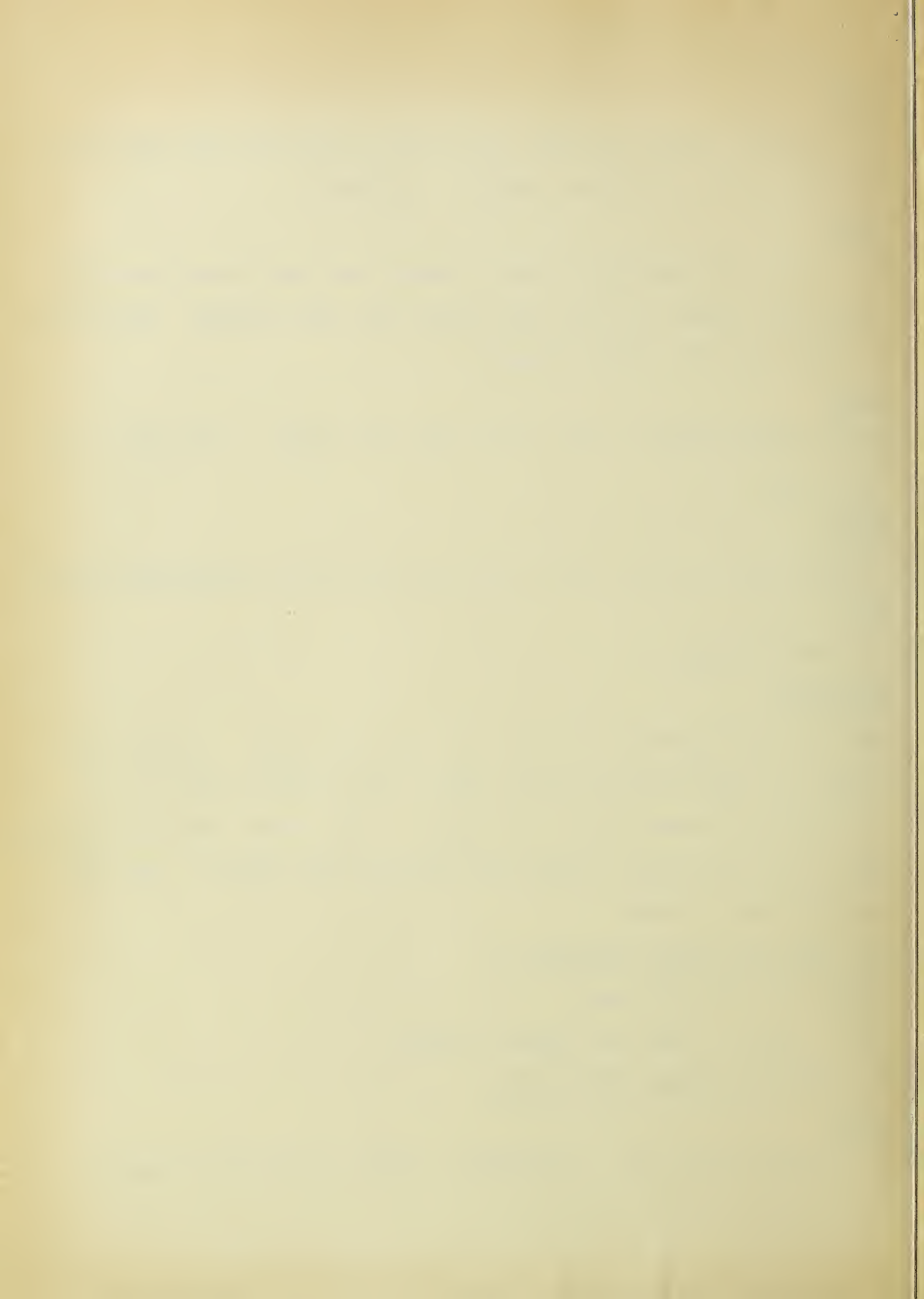
BERTHA (shouting off mike)

John! Samuel! Come on, supper's ready!

SOUND: Ensilage cutter shuts off...

YODER

All of you run on, now. (SHOUTING) Bertha, come here a minute!



BERTHA (fading in)

Yes, John?

YODER

See what I've got here, pet?

BERTHA

Why, John. It's the last note from the bank...and...and...it's marked paid in full! Oh John, I'm so happy!

YODER

Yes, dear. I made the last payment this morning, while the children were filling the silo. I wanted to tell you when we were alone -- just the two of us.

BERTHA (softly)

This is a wonderful day for us, John. It's been a long, hard struggle. (PAUSE) John, dear, couldn't you say a little prayer, a prayer of thankfulness.....

YODER

That's just what I wanted to do, dear, with you beside me.

ORGAN: Sneak in THE DOXOLOGY, softly.....

YODER

Our Heavenly Father, we offer our thanks for the loving care Thou has bestowed upon us. We humbly thank Thee, Dear Lord, for sustaining us in our need and giving us the courage and the health and the wisdom to carry us through those trying times; for inspiring us to carry on when things looked darkest. Bless us, Dear Father, and may we ever be humble in Thy sight. Amen.

ORGAN: Finish theme and out...

ANNOUNCER

And that's the true story of John Yoder of Champaign County, one of Ohio's pioneers in the use of grass ensilage. And now, once again we turn to the United States Department of Agriculture, and speaking for the Soil Conservation Service is Hal Jenkins.

JENKINS

Thanks, _____. I want to thank Lee Evans of the CCC camp at St. Paris, _____, for helping us prepare this story about John Yoder and his family.

ANNOUNCER

And an interesting story it was, Hal. Well, what's new in the conservation world this week?

JENKINS

AD LIBS TO FILL NECESSARY TIME..... And now, Walter Lowdermilk's eleventh commandment.

ORGAN: Sneak in DEEP RIVER theme....

ANNOUNCER

"Thou shalt inherit the holy earth as a faithful steward, conserving its resources and productivity from generation to generation. Thou shalt safeguard thy fields from soil erosion, thy living waters from drying up, thy forests from desolation, and protect thy hills from overgrazing by thy herds, so that thy descendants may have abundance forever. If any shall fail in this stewardship of the land thy fruitful fields shall become sterile stony ground and wasting gullies, and thy descendants shall decrease and live in poverty or be destroyed from off the face of the earth."

ORGAN: UP AND OUT.

